

### **AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS**

Please amend the claims as follows:

#### **LISTING OF CLAIMS:**

1. (Original) A process for producing vitamin C from L-sorbose which comprises contacting L-sorbose with a purified L-sorbose dehydrogenase having the following physico-chemical properties;
  - a) Molecular weight: 150,000  $\pm$  6,000 Da or 230,000  $\pm$  9,000 Da (consisting of 2 or 3 homologous subunits, each subunit having a molecular weight of 75,000  $\pm$  3,000 Da)
  - b) Substrate specificity: active on aldehyde compounds
  - c) Cofactors: pyrroloquinoline quinone and heme c
  - d) Optimum pH; 6.4 to 8.2 for the production of vitamin C from L-sorbose
  - e) Inhibitors:  $\text{Co}^{2+}$ ,  $\text{Cu}^{2+}$ ,  $\text{Fe}^{2+}$ ,  $\text{Ni}^{2+}$ ,  $\text{Zn}^{2+}$ , monoiodoacetate and ethylenediamine tetraacetic acid,wherein the conversion of L-sorbose to vitamin C is catalyzed by the purified L-sorbose dehydrogenase in the presence of an electron acceptor, and isolating the resulting vitamin C from the reaction mixture.
2. (Original) The process for producing vitamin C from L-sorbose according to claim 1, wherein the L-sorbose dehydrogenase is derived from the strain *Gluconobacter oxydans* DSM No. 4025 (FERM BP-3812), a microorganism belonging to the genus *Gluconobacter* having identifying characteristics to *G. oxydans* DSM 4025 (FERM BP-3812) or its mutants.

3. (Currently amended) The process according to claim 1 ~~claims 1 and 2~~, wherein the reaction is carried out at pH values of about 6.4 to about 9.0 and at a temperature range from about 20°C to 60°C for about 0.5 to 48 hours.

4. (Currently amended) The process according to claim 1 ~~any one of claims 1 and 2~~, wherein the reaction is carried out at pH values of about 7.0 to 8.2 and at a temperature range from about 20°C to 50°C for about 0.5 to 24 hours.